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N E W J E R S E Y R E P O R T

SPECIAL GUEST: Mr. Timothy Still, President, United Community Corporation, Newark

GUEST INTERVIEWER: Douglas Eldridge, Newark News

MODERATOR: John Scott

WOR-TV Channel 9 Sunday, March 24, 1968 10:30-11:00 AM

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(Script prepared by Radio TV Reports)

JOHN SCOTT: Good morning, and welcome to New Jersey Report. I'm John Scott of WOR-TV News.

Each Sunday morning at 10:30, Channel 9 as a public service presents an interview with an official of the State of New Jersey, in order that viewers might have a better understanding of how their government functions, some of its problems as well as its hopes for the future.

This morning we're pleased to have with us Timothy Still, who is President of the United Community Corporation, which is Newark's Anti-poverty agency.

Our reporter guest, we're happy to have back once again, Douglas Eldridge of the Newark Evening News.

Mr. Still, Congress has cut back recently on the budget for the Office of Economic Opportunity. I realize a national cutback means regional cutbacks, and in our situation it means a local cutback. What will this cutback mean for Newark?

TIMOTHY STILL: Well, it will have a devastating effect on the programs we're running in Newark.

To give you an example, the Newark Pre-school Program, which last year had money to run -- to provide for 2,404 youngsters, this year has been cut back to 1546. And with -- it's an eight percent cut really.

This means that 850 children that were served last year won't be served this year. It also means that the families of these children that we serviced will also -- won't be able to get the service that we provided them. So this will be -- all down the line it's being cut back. Pre-school has been cut back 14.1%. All other programs are being cut back 8.3%. We really

can't operate effectively if it's cut back this way.

SCOTT: You cannot operate effectively with this sort of cut.

STILL: That's right.

SCOTT: Overall, what percentage cut is this?

STILL: Oh, well, you mean in terms of money?

SCOTT: In terms of dollars.

STILL: Well, I'm not sure but it's -- it runs into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

SCOTT: And there's nothing that you can do about this?

STILL: Well, we met with the regional office this morning. This afternoon. I had to leave the meeting to come here. We're still talking about it, and we're going to do all we can to make sure we get this money, because we can't function really without the money we had last year.

SCOTT: Well, were they helpful at the regional office? Were they hopeful?

STILL: Well, as you know the regional office gets their funds from the money Congress allocates. And you know, they can't make money, and this -- and these cutbacks were all across the country. And we feel Newark has special kinds of situations. I'm hopeful that our Congressional delegations and whatever we have to do to get extra money we'll get it.

SCOTT: Oh, I see. You're hoping to put local pressure on the regional office and upon the members of Congress.

STILL: Right.

SCOTT: -- to get special funds into Newark. Is that right?

STILL: Right. Because we are a special community. Right.

SCOTT: What makes Newark a special community?

STILL: Well, as you know we had disturbances last year and we -- you know, many of the problems that we had last year were not run -- we had a great deal of difficulty with it last year. First our summer program didn't start until after the disturbances. We're hoping that we can get all this done.

Newark is unique it seems to me. In that we have a population situation where 55% of the population is Negro. And we have -- with all of the problems that this indicates, and we just have to have the money.

SCOTT: Well, isn't it true Mr. Still that you have four and a half million dollars in programs last summer?

STILL: Four and a half million dollars Mr. Scott with the programs we face really isn't any money.

SCOTT: But isn't that more than you anticipated getting when the program was first funded?

STILL: Oh yes it was. As a matter of fact, what happened was that the first year we were scheduled to get 1.5 million. And only because we had ~~Terrell~~ Cyril Tyson, who is an expert in the field, and because other communities in the State of New Jersey weren't able to come up with programs, they gave us the money for these programs rather than sending it back. So we were fortunate in that, but since we got these programs going, why we certainly can't sacrifice any of them because all of these programs are good programs and they're needed.

And as a matter of fact, we need to expand them not cut back on them.

SCOTT: But on the other hand, with that four and a half million dollars it did not serve to stop the rioting in Newark last summer. What leads us to believe that with an expansion or just keeping it even that it will prevent it in the future?

STILL: Well listen, I'm not saying that this is going to stop a riot. Certainly it won't. This meager program we've got going.

I think many other things have to be done to try to do something about the problems that start riots. The housing situation, the education situation, the job opportunities and all this kind of thing.

So I think this is just one of the components in trying to do something about the problems Newark faces.

SCOTT: I don't have to introduce you to Doug Eldridge. I'm sure he has some questions.

STILL: I know Doug very well.

DOUGLAS ELDRIDGE: I'd like to ask Mr. Still whether he thinks that perhaps indirectly the anti-poverty program has added to the unrest and frustration in the community by, in a sense, offering hopes and then not delivering on the promises.

STILL: I would say so. I would say that when this program originally started, all of us were very enthusiastic about getting programs started that would really make a difference in the lives of the people who lived in the ghetto, who had these serious problems -- disadvantaged people. And as time went on, we found

out that the hopes did not live up to the dreams, and many of them have been disappointed and disillusioned by it.

So I would say that this certainly hasn't helped at all.

SCOTT: In other areas of the country Mr. Still, it's been said that anti-poverty workers were in the forefront of the rioters. Is that true in Newark?

STILL: Well, first of all they said -- Newark itself -- the United Community Corporation was responsible for the riot. But I categorically deny this.

The Governor's Commission Report categorically denies this. The President's Commission Report says -- clears our agency. And this is not true. Of all the people arrested, only one person from our agency was arrested during the whole riot. So certainly we cannot be held responsible for the riots in Newark.

ELDRIDGE: Well, it's also been said that -- in both Commission Reports I think -- that some people who were active in the anti-poverty program in Newark also were involved in some of the controversies before the riot and that they might have contributed something to a climate of unrest in the City.

Do you think there's any legitimacy to that?

STILL: Well, I think, Doug, what you're talking about are two issues. One was the med site. And the other was the Board appointment.

Let's take the med site first. The med site was for 150 acres. And you know this was everybody -- even your own editors have come out and indicated that this was unreasonable and a ridiculous amount of land to ask for.

SCOTT: That's the medical school.

STILL: The medical school right. And the people from our agency did speak out. I even took a position against the 150 acres.

And there was no -- and when there are people who are trustees of our corporation, people who are members -- or who are members of our corporation, they speak as private persons. Only one person spoke for the United Community Corporation. We can't stop people from speaking. You know, they have a constitutional right to say what they want to say. As long as they don't speak for the United Community Corporation, they speak as private citizens. Even our employees have a right. We can't gag them. And when they're on their own time they have a right to say what they want to say. And I would applaud them fighting against the 150 acres. I think that they were justified in the fact that a settlement has just been made with the med site and because of people like Harry Wheeler, and Honey(?) Ward and George Richardson and Mrs. Epperson and Julius Williams, and all of those who helped make this possible. Had not these people gone out and supported it, this never would -- the hospital -- the med site -- we would have had 150 acres rather than what we have now.

STILL: Well you're here speaking this morning for the United Community Corporation.

STILL: Right.

SCOTT: As well as for yourself.

STILL: Right.

SCOTT: What is your position? On the medical school site?

STILL: Well, my position on the medical school site is that it should be -- it actually -- they don't even need 150 acres really.

You know, I think -- I live in a housing project which has 23 acres and it provides shelter for some six thousand people. Now we're talking about a med school that's going to house maybe -- is going to take care of maybe 700 to a thousand youngsters. Now if they can build housing for people to really live in and put me up on the tenth floor. In -- to conserve space on 23 acres. Then they can take for a school that's going to house a thousand kids, on 46 acres which is twice as much land. They could go up rather than out.

SCOTT: Well a compromise has been reached by the medical school.

STILL: Right.

SCOTT: Is it satisfactory to you?

STILL: Well, the community's quite pleased with the fact that this has been their victory, this has been the victory of the people I've named plus many other people who went forth and protested this.

I think this is the first time in this country that the community has negotiated with the state, with the city, and with the federal government to get something like this done. I think this is a tremendous achievement for the community yes.

ELDRIDGE: Do you see any issues on the horizon currently

that might flare up the same way that the medical school and the Board of Education appointment did last spring. Is there anything that looks explosive at this point?

STILL: Well, I think the fact that people are buying guns, that people are going on rifle ranges and being on elevision with this, I think this is certainly explosive if not more explosive than anything we had last year. And certainly we are doing all we can to try to calm the fears and try to get people to come together and talk things out rather than come together with arms and guns and things.

SCOTT: Mr. Still, what are the relations between the Negro community and the police in Newark? Have they improved any?

STILL: Well, we're trying to improve relations with the police department. We met with Director Spina last week and we are meeting with him again next week and we're trying to work out some kind of -- we're trying to work together with the police department. We recognize that the police department is the instrument to help people, and to maintain order and everybody wants this.

But we've had a problem with the police department in Newark because during the whole history of Newark there's never been a police officer charged with -- whenever a Negro is arrested, and he's beaten up, the cop has to say he's beaten him up because he was assualted. Otherwise, how was the man beaten up. And every single case in the history of the city has -- that -- there's never been a time that a Negro was found innocent and the cop guil-

ty. And there have been cases -- there have been cases of -- the Brown case, the Bratch(?) case, the Simons case. As a matter of fact, ten cases where there have been five and six people as witnesses and testified what the cops have done. And not a single time in the history of Newark has the cop been punished.

Has the cop been found guilty. So we're saying that, you know, that all Negroes don't lie and that sometimes that these cops do take advantage of people. What we're saying is that if the police department wants us to have confidence in them, what they have to do is start punishing policemen who take advantage of people.

SCOTT: Well the question I have to ask is, is your -- is your quarrel not now with the judiciary, with the judges who find against the --

STILL: Well, our charge is against the whole system. When it comes to the police department, the prosecutors, and everybody -- the FBI and everybody else. Because nobody's done anything about it. We have sent complaints to the FBI; they haven't done anything about it. We've sent complaints to the prosecutor. He hasn't done anything about it. We've sent complaints to the magsitrates and the courts, they haven't done anything about it. We went to the Mayor, we went to the police director, nobody has done anything about it.

And until somebody does something about it, how can we have confidence in the police department when they don't punish their men for taking advantage of people.

SCOTT: I'd like to get back to the magistrates for just

a minute. Do you think that the magistrates -- the Negroes -- [illegible] Negro in Newark?

STILL: Well, I don't think, I don't think -- we only have [illegible] d who's a fine young man. Now I don't think he handles indictable cases and [illegible] handled by the [illegible] his has been -- but I don't think you can blame it just on the guys that are there now. This has been the histo[illegible], not only in Newark but in most cities throughout this country.

[illegible] aldom has not [illegible] the Negro community.

STILL: Right, right. Especially when you're dealing with the police department.

SCOTT: If I may say so, Mr. Still, you're now a member of the establishment. You work for the government, you're part [illegible] Have you found [illegible] you [illegible] ha[illegible]bers of the Negro community?

[illegible] work for the establishment. [illegible] secretary of Congressman Minish(?) I don't get paid for the job I'm in here.

SCOTT: o, I understand that.

STILL: And you know, in my neighborhood, I think I'm [illegible] fairly well, because I try to call things as I see them. No matter who's wrong, they're wrong. You know, wrong is wrong, no matter who does it. You know. I think when the black militants get out

[illegible] that is

we do the white militants irresponsible guys.

[illegible]

do pretty good.

[illegible]

responsive?

[illegible]

happen to improve the situation.

SCOTT: What is the response when you meet with City

[illegible]

other officials.

[illegible] he's [illegible] department. [illegible] us in his favor.

[illegible] important. You know, [illegible] with him last week [illegible] that he's [illegible] is happy, and try [illegible] don't know.

[illegible] and I think [illegible] has his own feelings and [illegible] long past [illegible] kind of working relationship with him.

[illegible] what's going to be done this summer.

STILL: Right.

SCOTT: What ought to be done this summer?

STILL: Well, I think that we need to make a real effort [illegible] done.

[illegible]

[illegible] shut up in the house, you [illegible] under [illegible] have [illegible] - [illegible] in my project, 2500 children -- school-going children.

[illegible] people don't have something to do, some kind of [illegible] recreation, in [illegible] to have to find something to do [illegible] something in this [illegible] kind of programs that will keep them busy.

[illegible] we need [illegible] -- both [illegible] and the [illegible] And [illegible] problems. [illegible] people in the central ward in Newark ran as high as 35%.

STILL: In the Central Ward, right.

[illegible] do about it.

[illegible] are definitely making plans for the Summer. [illegible]

[illegible] of [illegible]. I met with [illegible]

[illegible] the budget [illegible]

from the [illegible] below [illegible] the [illegible] process. So the [illegible] year

[illegible] [illegible] going to be [illegible] five

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] money

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] forward [illegible] with the

answer, [illegible] basis of [illegible] and Senator Kennedy.

[illegible] there [illegible] [illegible]

feel [illegible] this affect on the [illegible] South [illegible]

[illegible] in the Kerner Commission Report?

[illegible] Well, you mean in terms of a national figure that

[illegible] that they might be able to rally around?

[illegible] This could be one aspect.

[illegible] I don't know. First of all, you know, Negroes

[illegible] of the population [illegible] this city, of

[illegible] together. And you know, I don't

[illegible] [illegible] of this country.

[illegible] but they can have the same kind of in-

[illegible] Negroes will certainly [illegible] their positions around

[illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible] community

based on the kinds of things they feel.

I think [illegible] like our community has strong feelings about

the war in Vietnam, and many people feel you know, that we ought

to get out. Many other people feel that we've made a commitment and we ought to stay there and fight. We have [illegible] fight and see it through. I'm not sure how I could answer that really.

SCOTT Well, what I meant to say is that there seems to be a new [illegible] of participation [illegible] along. Does this seem to give [illegible] people who live in the ghetto?

[illegible] Well, I [illegible] to be hopeful that [illegible] would. I [illegible] the fact that [illegible] Black was elected Mayor [illegible] in Gary there was elected -- I think that for Negroes to elect their own people and people to serve in their various high offices will help.

But I don't know just how much good in terms, you know, of dealing with the problems they face, it will do. I think it's going to be helpful, but I don't see how Gilbert will be able to meet all the problems he has until he's got two years in office.

And in two years I don't really see how he's going to make [illegible] years. Now, I'm hopeful that they're not disillusioned because [illegible]

And a guy like Stokes who has the kind of judgment, good [illegible] the city a good administration, it's going to take time. I'm [illegible]

[illegible] to see what [illegible] try to right for

[illegible] for

[illegible], I recall many times in [illegible] that we have mentioned the fact that the programs are not really reaching the guy on the street corner, the [illegible] and the [illegible] has no [illegible]

I wonder have you [illegible] in [illegible] that the [illegible] program is [illegible] it's [illegible] to do anything for them?

STILL. Well, we don't have a [illegible] program at this [illegible] that would [illegible] we have two programs that touch on this. But no program that's really designed to go out and [illegible] the guy who's a junkie or a wino, the drug [illegible] the bitter [illegible] guy [illegible] everybody.

We haven't a program geared to that. We do have two programs that touches out and tries to at least do something in this area. One is called CEP. CEP is the Concentrated Employment Program which provides the government be run with the youth and the city together.

This program is four million, three hundred thousand dollars, and it assigned two thousand jobs for hard-core unemployed people in the first year.

[illegible] This program has reached out to get many of [illegible] them in.

[illegible] program - we've got a narcotics program for four hundred thousand dollars that we're now about to get off the ground

I think these are two things that we are trying to do, but we haven't yet de[illegible] loo[illegible] get these [illegible] involved in [illegible]gram -- that [illegible] need to be involved. Because when you still talk about riots and things, these are the guys that are going to riot beca[illegible] they don't have no homes. They're lost. They have nothing to look forward to. These are the guys that have to get up ev[illegible] and come out on the street and [illegible] on the street [illegible] becau[illegible] there's no place to go. They can't earn money because [illegible] not able to fill out work forms. But these guys turn on tele-vision and see that everybody's making it but them.

You know, if you were like that -- put yourself in that kind of setup, how would you feel if you were in this kind of position. These are the kind of guys we've got to reach, and if we don't [illegible] we're really flirting with the worst kind of danger.

SCOTT: It was my impression that these [illegible] not the people who did the rioting.

STILL: Oh, don't let anybody tell you man. These were the guys who did the rioting be[illegible] I don't [illegible] are the rioting.

SCOTT: Well, isn't that [illegible] to what the President's commission said?

STILL: I don't care what the President's Commission said. You know, I live there and I know who did the rioting.

There were others also. There were others also, but these

guys -- those who were lost and bitter and bad -- they helped stimulate it. They were the guys who broke the windows. Other people just went in after the police came down to stop them. These were the guys who were the aggressive guys. These were the guys who didn't have nothing to lose.

SCOTT: In other words, you feel that the President's Commission report was not completely accurate with regards to who was doing the rioting?

STILL: Well, if that's what they said, they don't know what they're talking about.

SCOTT: Well you read the report Mr. Still.

STILL: No, I didn't. All of it. All I read was the part about Newark in there that dealt with Newark. It went from page 56 I think up to page about 70, with Newark in it. That's all I read about. And if it said that these guys weren't involved in the riot, then they don't know what they were talking about.

ELDRIDGE: Well, they did indicate that the people who were the most involved were not at the very bottom of the social heap and that they were not the people who were the most hopeless but those perhaps who had jobs and were working.

You say that that doesn't square with what you saw?

STILL: Well, no, I wouldn't say that. No. I think the guys who were at the bottom, who have nothing to lose, who -- I think those were the principal agents of starting it and keeping it going. And I think that anything that says other than that don't know what they're talking about.

SCOTT: So you feel that your efforts should be directed

towards this really disenfranchised group?

STILL: Well, I think you should direct it towards the whole community because everybody's involved. You know, even the guys who are making it. Their kids go to the schools in that area. I think it has to be directed to everybody. But I think that a special effort should be made with guys who are lost, who don't have any hope. Yes. I think so.

SCOTT: One criticism aimed at the President's Commission's Report was aimed by a black militant who said that the worst thing you can do is to give things to the people in the ghetto because this doesn't give them an opportunity to gain the self-respect that working does. And really what they need is jobs.

Would you agree?

STILL: That's ridiculous nonsense. Ridiculous stupid nonsense. Listen we've got as big a fools amongst the Negroes as you've all got amongst the white folks.

SCOTT: I'll trade you some of mine for some of yours. I would like to ask though what about the private enterprise. Has business come to the support of you and your efforts, and the efforts of your community at all?

STILL: Well, I would honestly have to say that as of last year, I would have to say that this wasn't true. They hadn't cooperated, they hadn't done what they should have done.

But I think that for the last few months, that the business community has really come alive, and they're really beginning now to try and do something about the problems.

In Newark for instance they called together two or three

hundred businessmen and they pledged to provide twelve hundred jobs for the hard-core unemployed.

Orvell Bier, who is the President of Prudential Insurance Company, is now the director -- he went to Washington with the businessmen -- what is is?

ELDRIDGE: The National Alliance of Businessmen.

STILL: The National Alliance of Businessmen, who -- now Newark has pledged to find two thousand jobs for hard-core unemployed.

So I think that the business community is now beginning to move, and one of the concerns that I have is that the business people -- the progressives and the labor people are becoming reactionary.

Did you see what happened yesterday -- the people -- for the longshoreman thing. You know, people who never had a chance to earn $3.50 an hour, the unions are now blocking the people trying to get the jobs. And while I'm a good union man, and you know, always been involved with the unions, I'm just hopeful that they don't stop us from doing things that we could get done that would be very helpful.

ELDRIDGE: Is there any improvement in the climate of your own area because of all these efforts by the business community? And so on.

STILL: Well they're just starting to organize, and I don't think at this point that we can assess what good it's doing. I think we'll have to wait and see.

SCOTT: The big problem right now is getting more money

out of the regional office.

STILL: Money, money, money, money. We've got to have some money.

SCOTT: When do you think you'll have a definite answer?

STILL: Well, I don't know. But as a matter of fact, we've -- Walter Dawkins said that if, you know, if they kept the 8.3% cut that we ought to turn it all back, but I'm not ready to do that, you know. But I think we have to do some kind of -- something drastic because the programs as we presently -- we cannot run our programs with this cutback and run them effectively.

SCOTT: I want to thank you very much for being with us this morning Mr. Still.

Our guest has been Timothy Still, who is President of the United Community Corporation, which is Newark's Anti-Poverty Agency. And our reporter guest has been Douglas Eldridge, reporter of the Newark Evening News.

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May I suggest you stay tuned now for New York Report. Lester Smith's guest will be Eugene Hault, New York City's Commissioner of Public Works. And that's immediately following station identification.

Until next Sunday morning at ten-thirty, I'm John Scott of WOR TV News bidding you good-day.